major reserved forests, their exploitation was not easy and hence the Forest authorities might attach more importance to trees on private holdings. This objection should not prevail in the interests of the welfare of the ryots. The need for the abolition of this royalty had been urged on the Government both through the Assembly and the Legislative Council. It was as a result of these representations that a committee to enquire into and report on this question was appointed. But nothing further was done. The question should therefore be taken up and disposed of early. It might be noted that in other Indian States, such as Mysore and Cochin, this royalty did not exist and that it was high time that it was abolished in Travancore also.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai, your representation will be considered.

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14. Production of account books in courts.

MR. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Trading Classes, Kayankulam*) said that it was necessary that account books of merchants produced in courts were returned promptly. According to the practice in vogue, these books were retained in courts for one or two weeks. A formal stamped petition for the return of the books and a formal order by the presiding authority were necessary for the return of the books. Formerly, it was enough if a copy of the account required be produced with the original and on the filing of an unstamped petition the books, in original, used to be returned. This arrangement was most convenient to the merchants. The need for reviving this practice was represented at the 26th and 27th sessions of the Assembly and the Government stated that the matter was under consideration. The matter should be taken up without further delay and the grievances of the traders redressed.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Krishna Pillai, this question is stil under the consideration of the High Court.

15. Defects in the administration of civil and criminal justice in Travancore and remedies therefor.

MR. C. R. RAMAN PILLAI (*Municipal Council, Tiruvalla*) said that much hardship was being experienced by the people on account of the administration of civil justice. Litigation was increasing day by day, especially with the rapid increase in the number of *chitties* and banks. While on this point the member said that there was no limit to the number of *chitties* in the State. No fresh *chitties* should be registered unless the intending foremen produced certificates as regards their position from leading men of the locality. Further, the antecedents of the foremen, especially in regard to the previous *chitties*, if any, conducted by them should be enquired into before new *chitties* were registered.

The recruitment of Munsiffs and Magistrates should be made with greater care. Only capable men should be appointed as Magistrates and Munsiffs. Mere seniority alone should not be the sole criterion in giving promotions.

The document writers in the State were not qualified for their work. An appreciable percentage of the litigation was due to this class of people who drafted documents with indifference and with no technical skill. These men should be licensed and only those who have studied the Registration Regulation should be given the license.

There was a rule that all documents brought for registration should be read to the parties. This was unworkable expecially when a document covered a number of pages. It would therefore be well if a certificate by a vakil that a document had been read to the parties be insisted on before it was registered. If this be approved, the plea sometimes advanced by the parties to civil case that they signed the documents without reading them, would not be raised.

As regards the appointment of judges of Village Panchayat Courts and of Bench Magistrates, the member said that, in the interests of the proper working of these institutions, the applicants for these places should not be selected. It would be desirable to appoint men with judicial experience to these places. Retired judicial officers and vakils would be the proper men for selection.

A large number of cases were pending disposal at the Stationary Magistrate's Court, Chengannur. If criminal cases be kept pending for two or three years, the public would be put to much inconvenience and hardship. It should therefore be ruled that all summons cases should be disposed of within a period of one month and all warrant cases within 3 months. If any court in any place was not able to do this on account of the heavy file, more courts should be opened. The member requested that these points might be kept in view in considering the report of the Law's Delays Commissioner.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Raman Pillai, you raised several subjects on which an answer cannot be given at the moment.

Regarding the registration of too many banks and too many *chitties*, we have no power under the present Regulations to impose conditions against such registration. If this has to be done, the Regulations have to be amended.

The other points you have mentioned will be considered.

In regard to the delay in the disposal of criminal cases, it will be stopped as soon as possible.

In regard to law's delays, the report of the Law's Delays Commissioner will be ready soon, and action will be taken on it. I do not think I can say anything definite on it at the moment. Your representation will be carefully considered.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 2. 7 P. M. and met again at 3 P. M.

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